

II. Remarks

Claims 1-23 and 25-41 of the present application are pending. Claims 1-8, 10-19 and 25-41 have been allowed. Claim 9 has been rejected, and claims 20-23 have been objected to. Claim 24 was previously cancelled, and by this paper, claim 9 is being cancelled. By the amendments and remarks provided herewith, the Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections and objections.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed claims 1-8, 10-19, and 25-41. Applicants sincerely thank the Examiner for the thorough examination and allowance of these claims.

The Examiner has objected to claims 20-23 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, claim 20, from which claims 21-23 generally depend, has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Thus, these claims are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Responsive to the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,998,551 to O'Neil et al. (*O'Neil*), claim 9 is being cancelled, and therefore, this rejection has become moot.

Conclusion

Thus, claims 1-8, 10-23, and 25-41 are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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